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Question of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas)

Letter dated 16 January 2008 from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

In accordance with the instructions received from my Government, I have the honour to refer to the letter dated 3 January 2008 from the Deputy Permanent Representative of Argentina addressed to you, transmitting in an annex the text of a press release issued on 3 January 2008 by the Government of Argentina on the question of the Falkland Islands (A/62/639).

The Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland has no doubt about the sovereignty of the United Kingdom over the Falkland Islands, South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands and their surrounding maritime areas, and rejects the claims by the Government of Argentina to sovereignty over those islands and maritime areas and that the Falkland Islands are under illegal occupation by the United Kingdom.

The principle of self-determination, enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, underlies our position on the sovereignty of the Falkland Islands. There can be no negotiation on the sovereignty of the Falkland Islands unless and until such time as the Falkland Islanders so wish. The Islanders regularly make it clear that they wish the Falkland Islands to remain under British sovereignty.

The United Kingdom continues to believe that there are many opportunities for cooperation in the South Atlantic under the "Sovereignty Umbrella" established in the United Kingdom-Argentina Joint Statement of 19 October 1989, which would be of mutual benefit. The United Kingdom has made a number of recent proposals in this respect and remains keen to foster a constructive relationship with Argentina and to promote practical cooperation in the South Atlantic.

I should be grateful if you would circulate the present letter as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 24.

(*Signed*) John **Sawers**

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